

Message Text

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SUBJ: BERLIN'S LEADING POLITICAL JOURNALIST REFLECTS ON BREZHNEV
VISIT, THE QUADRIpartite AGREEMENT AND BERLIN

REF: (A) USBERLIN 1143; (B) USBERLIN 1111; (C) USBERLIN 1168
(NOTAL)

1. IN VERY LENGTHY LEAD EDITORIAL SUNDAY MAY 15 (FULL TEXT POUCHED
TO ADDRESSEES), TAGESSPIEGEL EDITOR JOACHIM BOELKE REVIEWED, IN
LIGHT OF BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRG, EFFECT OF QUADRIpartite AGREE-
MENT ON BERLIN'S POSITION IN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF EAST-WEST
RELATIONS. BEGINNING WITH THE NEGOTIATING PERIOD ITSELF,
BOELKE NOTES SEVERAL SPECIFIC OCCASIONS E.G. THE FEDERAL
ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE "CRISIS" TOGETHER WITH ITS AFTERMATH,
WHICH DEMONSTRATE THE SOMEWHAT DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS HELD BY
THE FRG, WEST BERLIN AND THE ALLIES AS TO THE POSSIBILITIES
OFFERED BY THE QA FOR BERLIN'S DEVELOPMENT, AND ITS ULTIMATE
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PURPOSE IN THE REALM OF THE FRG'S FOREIGN POLICY, SPECIFICALLY
AS IT IS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE EAST. COMMENTING ON THE
PRESENT SITUATION BOELKE WRITES THAT THE SCHMIDT GOVERN-
MENT PERCEIVES THE PRESENT STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS
TO BE LESS SATISFACTORY THAN IT WOULD LIKE BECAUSE THE UNITED
STATES IS NOT DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS FROM A POSITION
OF STRENGTH. CONSEQUENTLY, BOELKE SUGGESTS, SCHMIDT

HAS FOUND IT NECESSARY TO ACT ON HIS OWN TO SOLIDIFY HIS EASTERN FLANK. TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE SOVIETS, BOELKE SUGGESTS FURTHER, SCHMIDT HAS DETERMINED THAT BERLIN MUST BE REMOVED AS A DISTURBING FACTOR IN THE FRG'S RELATIONS WITH THE USSR. BOELKE CONCLUDES HIS EDITORIAL BY WARNING THAT ALTHOUGH SCHMIDT'S DECISIONS WITH RESPECT TO BERLIN MAY BE UNDERSTANDABLE, THEY SUGGEST A POLICY WHICH COULD BECOME DANGEROUS FOR BERLIN, PARTICULARLY IF THE FRG ALLOWS A ROLLBACK OF THE STATUS QUO IN BERLIN THROUGH A MORE RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE QA THAN THAT WHICH HAS BEEN PRACTICED BY THE WEST SINCE THE QA'S SIGNING IN 1971.

2. COMMENT: BOELKE, WHO WILL TRAVEL WITH THE PRESS WHEN CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT VISITS WASHINGTON MAY 25-31 (REF C), IS ONE OF BERLIN'S MORE ASTUTE POLITICAL JOURNALISTS. HE KNOWS THE BERLIN SCENE EXTREMELY WELL AND HIS SOURCES ARE THE TOP POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE CITY AND IN BONN. THE VIEWS OUTLINED IN HIS EDITORIAL REFLECT, WE BELIEVE, THE PERCEPTION OF THE CURRENT STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS HELD BY MANY THOUGHTFUL BERLINERS, AND TO THE POTENTIAL DANGERS FOR BERLIN WHICH MUST BE AVOIDED IF THE CITY'S BEST INTERESTS ARE TO BE SERVED. GEORGE

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